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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/615,712	07/08/2003	Dale Pestes	CDM:3912.9999	9438

7590 10/18/2007
Chernoff Vilhauer McClung & Stenzel, L.L.P.
1600 ODS Tower
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Portland, OR 97204-3157

EXAMINER

APANIUS, MICHAEL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3736

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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10/18/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/615,712

Applicant(s)

PESTES ET AL.

Examiner

Michael Apanius

Art Unit

3736

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 August 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 8/16/2007 has been entered. The amendment to claim 6 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gradone (US 3,712,296) in view of Trenz et al. (US 6,745,427).

4. Gradone discloses a method of collecting a specimen with a swab and depositing a specimen into a collection device comprising: (a) providing a swab (figure 1) having a swab tip which is releasably attached to one end of a unitary elongate handle (18); (b) providing a sleeve (14) which is not attached to said swab tip and is slidable along said handle; (c) collecting a specimen on said swab tip (column 2, lines 33-35); and (d)

placing said swab such that said swab tip is adjacent to an opening in a collection device (column 2, lines 36-39).

5. Although Gradone discloses displacing the swab tip into a collection device without any of said handle or said sleeve being attached by pushing the handle (column 2, lines 36-43), a step of urging the sleeve along the handle and against the swab tip to remove the swab tip completely from the handle is not expressly disclosed.

6. Trenz teaches an alternative means for removing a tip from a handle. In particular, Trenz teaches urging a sleeve (6 in figure 2) along a handle (5) and against a tip to remove the tip completely from said handle allowing said tip to drop without either of said handle or said sleeve being attached. The configuration of Trenz allows the tip to be removed without touching the tip itself (column 1, lines 43-46). Note that it is well known and routine in the art to substitute alternative known elements and steps.

7. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have modified the method of Gradone by urging a sleeve against the tip as taught by Trenz in order to achieve the predictable result of removing the swab tip without touching the swab tip itself.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to amended claim 6 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion


9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Mueller, JR. (US 2004/0260201) discloses a cytology brush with a releasable end portion.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Apanius whose telephone number is (571) 272-5537. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8am-4:30pm.

11. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Max Hindenburg can be reached on (571) 272-4726. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

12. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MA


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